

# FURZE PLATT FOCUS

Weekly Newsletter - Issue #63.2



## MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER



Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

### Online Schooling

Thank you to all our students, parents, carers and staff who have adjusted so swiftly to online learning. We have had many compliments for the lessons being delivered, as well as some helpful feedback. We are not in your homes experiencing lessons from a student perspective so your observations are helpful and have informed refinements like the screen and toilet breaks we are introducing (see next page for details).



### Covid Testing

This week saw us conduct the first round of testing of students and staff who are onsite at FPSS, using the Lateral Flow Device. All results have so far been negative. From now until our return we will be testing our Keyworker and Vulnerable students, as well as staff, each Monday. We are expecting to be asked to expand our testing programme when students return and will send consent forms and details to all parents and carers once a return date is confirmed.

### 2021 Exams Consultation

On Wednesday there were letters exchanged between Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, and Simon Lebus, Head of Ofqual, outlining the parameters for the system by which grades will be awarded this summer. We are expecting some consultation documents out imminently and I will contact Year 11 and 13 students, parents and carers when more is known.

Take care and keep safe.

Dr Andrew J Morrison (BA Hons, PGCE, MA, PhD)

**HEADTEACHER'S VIDEO MESSAGE**



## UPCOMING EVENTS

ALL EVENTS

SPORTS CALENDAR

**Some dates for our upcoming events may change due to the current situation.**

**Full details will be sent out nearer the time of the specific event.**

### TERM 3 EVENTS

THU 4 FEBRUARY	Year 9F Parents' and Students' Virtual Consultation Evening	4.15pm - 7.15pm
THU 11 FEBRUARY	Year 9P Parents' and Students' Virtual Consultation Evening	4.15pm - 7.15pm
FRI 12 FEBRUARY	Year 9 Virtual GCSE Options	
END OF TERM (TERM 3)		
MON 15 - FRI 19 FEBRUARY	FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS	
MON 24 FEBRUARY	START OF TERM 4 (Week 2)	

## SIXTH FORM APPLICATIONS DEADLINE TODAY

YEAR 11

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN FOR OUR SIXTH FORM

## APPLY NOW!

DEADLINE: FRIDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021

For full details on how to apply:

[www.furzeplatt.com](http://www.furzeplatt.com)

and visit our Sixth Form section

**Wide range of A levels / vocational qualifications**

- ▶ New this year:
  - Fashion & Textiles
  - Level 3 Diploma in Food Science

See our website for our Sixth Form Prospectus, Course Guide, Virtual Sixth Form Open Evening & much more!

Furze Platt Road, Maidenhead SL6 7NQ Tel: 01628 625308

Don't forget the deadline is also today for applying to an infant or junior school.

**SIXTH FORM VIRTUAL OPEN EVENING 2020**

**CAREERS UPDATE**

**Year 11 Careers Interviews**

Careers interviews, offering help and support with future plans, are continuing by email or phone. All Year 11 students have received an email about this offer, if your son/daughter would like to take advantage of this, please ask them to contact Mrs Bubb, details below.

**Virtual Work Experience Placements for Years 10-13**

The link below gives details of a variety of virtual free work experience placements, most of which are suitable for students in Years 10-13. Most of the placements take place during February half term and involve around ten hours of activities. Students need to apply for a place in advance. The placements include some top employers such as BT, Vodafone, Nestle and the NHS and careers such as the law, teaching, journalism, marketing, finance, nursing and medicine.

**SPRINGPOD - VIRTUAL WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Virtual University and Apprenticeships Fairs**

Students who are considering going to university or finding an apprenticeship provider after Year 13 might be interested in the events in the links below. The events are free, and are aimed at students in Years 11, 12 and 13, and their parents although younger students may be interested too. Advance registration is required for both events.

**26<sup>th</sup> January, UK University & Apprenticeship Search Virtual Fair**

**UK UNIVERSITY & APPRENTICESHIP SEARCH**

**10<sup>th</sup> February Meet the Russell Group**

**MEET THE RUSSELL GROUP**

If you have any questions about any of the above, please contact Mrs Bubb, Careers Leader, at [judith.bubb@furzeplatt.net](mailto:judith.bubb@furzeplatt.net).



**EQUIPPED FOR LEARNING**

Please could parents and carers encourage students to have equipment next to them as they attend our online lessons. If students have pens, pencils paper etc. next to them it helps maintain the flow of the lesson. Thank you!



**SCREEN AND TOILET BREAKS**

With live online lessons in Lockdown 3, students (and staff) are spending long periods staring at screens. We have received several requests from students, parents, carers and staff to have a short break. Teachers have been asked to end lessons earlier in order to allow that break between lessons, rest eyes and have a chance to freshen up for the next one.

**MESSAGE FOR YEAR 7 AND YEAR 8 PARENTS**



In the first two terms of this academic year, students in Year 7 and Year 8 were loaned books from the library for use in English lessons.

Many of these have been returned, but we are also aware that a number of students still have their copies out on loan.

Could we please request that you check with your child whether they still have their copy of any of the following titles and, if so, that they are kept safe and returned to the school library as soon as we are able to be back in school properly?

- A Monster Calls (Year 7)
- Once (Year 8)
- Private Peaceful (Year 8)
- The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (Year 8)

Many thanks for your assistance with this.

Mr J Clarke, 2<sup>nd</sup> in English



**ENGLISH SHORT STORY WINNER**

Well done to Sophie McLachlan (Year 8) for her winning short story entry, entitled 'Dimensions' (which you can read on the next two pages of this newsletter).

Our team of judges were impressed with Sophie's narration with plenty of drama and action to keep them interested and at the edge of their seats.

Excellent work Sophie and your gift card and certificate will be on its way soon.

# Dimensions

## by Sophie McLachlan (Year 8)



As the pale light of dawn crept over the horizon, warming the bleak morning with an orange glow, the international conference had begun. It was 08:03, as the richest and most influential men in the world sat down at one table to discuss the issue at hand. Sunlight leaked in imperceptibly, narrowing the cynical eyes that flinched whenever a noise occurred. The Russian government broke the silence. All eyes turned.

“I believe everyone knows why we are here today.” Spoke President Orlov in a durable voice, that gave nothing away.

“My top scientists have discovered the impossible, which will only be put in place if agreed by everyone here. We can travel in dimensions...” The room broke into laughter, President Orlov’s serious expression screwed up into an angry frown.

“Dimensions,” scoffed the British Prime Minister in laughter, giggling away like an immature child.

“I have always told you the Russians were insane!” he continued. Rage boiled inside of the Russian President, twisting and roaring.

“I will show you all!” President Orlov bellowed as he marched out of the conference room and slammed the door shut with all the strength he could muster.

The day was drawing to a close, as President Orlov was getting the first plane back to Moscow. After a long journey, he stormed into the Government Inventions Building. His eyes followed the spaceship up to its apex. He marched over to his Head of Aerospace Engineering, Professor Ivanov.

“When is the spaceship ready to fly, Professor?” he demanded.

“It is ready in one hour Sir,” the Professor responded.

“One hour it is then, I want the best of the best on that spaceship, I will show those British fools who they are messing with. In Russia, we do it the Russian way. They do not know who they are messing with.”

10, 9, 8, 7.... The clock was counting down vehemently, as the ten Russian crewmen were strapped into the cockpit, all geared up. They were selected, only the best of the best, which of course included President Orlov himself... 3, 2, 1 BLASTOFF!

An explosion of blinding bright light, inflicted heat and apprehension, as the shuttle lifted into space.

“Are we ready to try out this new innovation?” shouted Pilot Smirnov, trying to be heard over the chattering excitement.

“Do it,” replied President Orlov, in a determined and daring voice.

“Do it, ...now!” The spaceship jolted from side to side, but then a sudden burst of bright light occurred. They looked back. They could not see earth anymore. They did it. They travelled dimensions...

You could almost hear the faint sound of drumming heartbeats against their chests. Everyone had the same baffled expression of shock.

“Look Sir, over there,” pointed the pilot.

Continued on page 4

He glanced out of the window to his right and saw a spherical aqua blue ball illuminating in the vast emptiness.

“That planet is now ours. It belongs to Mother Russia, and nobody else!” he exclaimed triumphantly.

The jubilant crew cheered their support.

As the spaceship landed, everyone’s training kicked in. The crew diligently got on with their tasks.

As he disembarked in his spacesuit, President Orlov was surrounded by a thick mist through which he could only see vague shades and shapes of darkness around him. He stepped off the ramp into oozy green slime. He continued, with six other crewmen. And then, out of the shadows came a yellow and blue striped figure. It was around one metre tall with colourful antennas, with protruding teeth, it had three arms, staring at the young man with 6 empty eyes. Officer Kunnetsky was the first to react, he aimed his pistol and shot twice at the creature. Everyone stared, no blinks, no emotion, just stood there impassive. They gawked at Kunnetsky. Then looked back at the corpse.

“We are not alone,” muttered the pilot, stating the obvious.

“This is our world; we kill them all!” cried Orlov. Everyone was surprised at what they heard but nobody wanted to refuse. The crew continued killing, hundreds were dead. But young Officer Minsky was not one of them, he had been working for the British Secret Service for years. During the slaughter, he moved away from the others and contacted his handler.

“Hello Minsky,” said Agent Murray

“Have you accomplished your time travelling task yet - or was it travelling dimensions?” he continued sarcastically.

“Actually, we have, but let me explain.” The two of them were talking for an hour, until Agent Murray said,

“We will tell the world the truth, that the Russians are killing innocent creatures for their selfish reasons. We will put it on the news. But if it is true how merciless Orlov is, then I would urge you to get away from that planet as soon as possible. Be warned, they will know there is a traitor amongst them. Get to the rendezvous, my men will meet you at the Cathedral of Consumption, Moscow, at 15:00. Good luck.”

A deafening din screeched in the air, this was perfect timing, this was the distraction he needed. He took the opportunity graciously, as he sprinted into the spaceship. He had some training in flying aircrafts, hopefully enough...

Minsky got into the spacecraft. Put his helmet on and off he went; he could hear the bitter scream of the President, he blocked them out, no going back now. He went through dimensions and then he saw Earth. It went so fast. He eventually landed and was met by officials. Minsky was able to make his excuses and slipped away, grabbing a taxi to The Cathedral of Consumption. The British agent greeted the young officer with open arms.

“Well done, do not worry, in less than an hour it will be on the World News.” His hand patted him on the back reassuringly. It was over.

President Orlev was arrested on arrival. Minsky was safe in Britain working for the Secret Service. The aliens were safe; because of one man who fought for what was right.







## INTRODUCING OUR NEW PARENT SUPPORT WORKER

Furze Platt has been joined this term by our new Parent Support Worker Benvenuta Di Bartolomeo.

We recognise that lockdown is not only a challenging time for young people but also for parents too and Ms Bartolomeo will be running a workshop on 'Parental Self-care' on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January at 3.30pm via Microsoft Teams.

This workshop will include information, guidance and practical advice on:

- The importance of self-care
- How parental self-care can positively impact on young people
- How to seek support if feeling negative patterns of thoughts during lockdown
- Practical tips for maintaining self-care

In addition, it is an opportunity to virtually meet and ask any questions of our Parental Support Worker

If you would like to book to attend this workshop or to find out more please email [Benvenuta.DiBartolomeo@furzeplatt.net](mailto:Benvenuta.DiBartolomeo@furzeplatt.net)

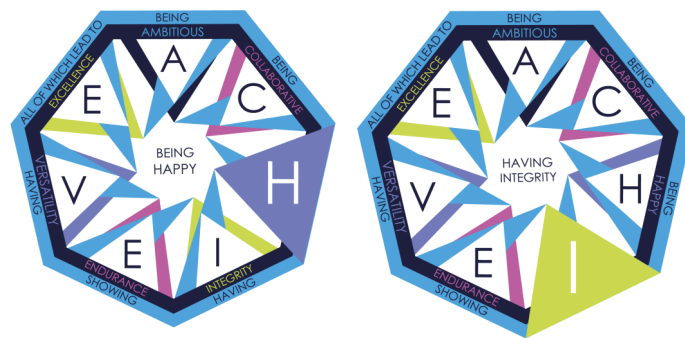


## GCSE POD USAGE REPORT

Students and teachers watched 29,705 Pods last term (September to December) – the average for a similar sized school is around 3,500.

Maths, Chemistry and English Literature were our most popular subjects.

Well done everyone, remember to continue using it to complement your on-line studies.



## DUKE OF EDINBURGH AWARD SCHEME

A reminder that the £60 deposit to enrol on the DoFE Award programme is due by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Please note that the consent form will be distributed after this date.

Elizabeth Thornton-Harwood, our DofE Operations Officer, Mr Randall, our Outdoor Education & Enrichment Coordinator and I will host a virtual meeting to discuss next steps on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February from 5.30pm. The link for this meeting will be sent to parents who have paid the deposit prior to the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> February.

Please find the application pack attached; we would be grateful if you could encourage your child to start their activities as soon as possible as they can be backdated. The attached log book can be used to help them keep track of their progress.

Please also find attached a flyer listing dates and times of additional parent and carer support, information and Q&A sessions, hosted by colleagues from the DofE. This is aimed at parents who are interested in finding out further information about the award.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions on [dofe@furzeplatt.net](mailto:dofe@furzeplatt.net)

We very much look forward to supporting your child to achieve their Bronze or Silver Award.

Miss D Carty, DofE Manager

PARENT SUPPORT SESSION DETAILS

BRONZE APPLICATION PACK

BRONZE LOG BOOK

SILVER APPLICATION PACK

SILVER LOG BOOK



## AND FINALLY...

Many congratulations to Elisa Gjergo (Year 9) who has had her first book published!

Elisa, who is being published under her first name only, began writing 'My Fur, My Skin, My Scars' in Year 7 and now plans to pursue a writing career after university and time abroad. During lockdown she has been working on her second novel.

'My Fur, My Skin, My Scars' can be found on Amazon and for pre-order in WHSmith, Barnes & Noble and Waterstones and many more (links below).

[BUY ON AUSTIN MACAULEY](#)

[BUY ON AMAZON](#)



## ACCESSING MICROSOFT TEAMS

For details on how to access Microsoft Teams from either an Xbox or PlayStation please click here:

[VIEW GUIDE](#)



## CALLING ALL BIRD WATCHERS!

If you fancy doing something a little bit different, how about taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch 2021 run by the RSPB. Just log on to the link below to register your interest. Once you have set up your account you can gain access to a range of free resources in order to count the number of birds you see in your garden, during a set period of time, over a specific weekend (29<sup>th</sup>- 31<sup>st</sup> January).

[GET INVOLVED](#)



It would be great to see as many students taking part as possible. Please take pictures of your bird watch along with your results and then email them to Miss Holmes in the Art Department. We can keep these as evidence which will help us work towards obtaining our Green Flag Eco Award.

Thank you.

## Synopsis:

*"When they find a mysterious hatch, Vortex, Rin and Blue, merely acquaintances, are hurled into the middle of a war-torn world. With five others, they travel deep into every clan, learn its secrets and eventually go to war. However, while they hunt for these secrets in the shadows, they soon realize that there are more questions within the group than outside of it."*

*This isn't the story of three clans driven apart by war. This is a story of eight people, what makes them similar and different, what brings them together and drives them apart and, ultimately, what keeps them alive."*

Elisa, now 13, finished writing the book last year. Her favourite lessons at school are (unsurprisingly!) English and History but she enjoys most lessons. She was inspired to write the book by a former English teacher who suggested she put her characters into a longer story, which eventually shaped into this book. Elisa also enjoys travelling and seeing new places, finding the scenery and culture inspiring for her own descriptions.

Well done to her!





# Parents, Teachers & Friends Association

Contact us

Email: [ptfa@furzeplatt.net](mailto:ptfa@furzeplatt.net) | Facebook: [facebook.com/fpsstfta](https://www.facebook.com/fpsstfta)

Charity Number 287878



**PTFA Meeting - Tuesday 26th January - 8pm - on Zoom**

Topic: FPSS PTFA Meeting Jan 2021  
Time: Jan 26, 2021 08:00 PM London

### Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/99899992379?pwd=Mk15OVd1Yyt6YlpkZ2MwMmRDeWZVQT09>

Meeting ID: 998 9999 2379 Passcode: 2gHrj0

**Virtual Family Quiz - Friday 4th February - 8pm-9pm - on Zoom.**

Entry granted once payment is received.

<https://donorbox.org/ptfa-family-quiz-furze-platt-senior-school>



VIRTUAL QUIZ NIGHT  
FRIDAY 4TH FEBRUARY

**FURZE PLATT SENIOR SCHOOL PTFA**  
**FRIDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2021**  
**8PM TO 9PM, JOIN FROM 7.45PM**  
**Entry £10 per household**  
Buy now: <https://donorbox.org/ptfa-family-quiz-furze-platt-senior-school>  
VIA ZOOM (LINK SUPPLIED UNDER SEPARATE COVER)  
Back in the hot seat for 2021 is the legendary Quizmaster Jeff Lloyd!!!  
Please join us on screen for an hour of fun and fundraising!  
6 rounds featuring pictures, music and an interactive round for the whole family.  
Line up your snacks and drinks and be ready for 8 o' clock.  
The Zoom link will be advised after purchase so PLEASE ensure our email address: [ptfa@furzeplatt.net](mailto:ptfa@furzeplatt.net) is on your clean list.  
Follow us on Facebook.com/fpsstfta  
Email us: [ptfa@furzeplatt.net](mailto:ptfa@furzeplatt.net)

CLICK HERE PLEASE!

Please click on the logos below to register and raise money for our school:





#READINGFC

# ONLINE PL KICKS SESSIONS FACEBOOK LIVE FOOTBALL SESSIONS

Great news! Our PL Kicks coaches will be streaming a [facebook](#) live football Kicks session for all once a week. The sessions will be on the [Reading FC Community Trust](#) account.

When : The sessions will be on a [Thursday](#) at 4pm.

Where : You can do these sessions indoors or outdoors, all you need is roughly 4m x 4m space.

Age : 8 - 18 years old

Equipment : All you need is a football and 4 cones, cone alternatives could be - bottles, jumpers or shoes.



SCAN THE CONSENT  
FORM'S QR CODE BEFORE  
THE SESSION

OR CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO  
ACCESS THE CONSENT FORM

[CONSENT FORM](#)



Premier League  
**Kicks**

